

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD
DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

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The Learning Tree is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1. **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The principles embedded in this policy link into other policies relating to Health and Safety, Anti-Bullying (Child Sexual Exploitation), Behaviour and Discipline, Confidentiality, First Aid, Staff Code of Conduct, Data Protection and more.

The safety, welfare and best interests of all the children attending The Learning Tree are our highest priority. Our primary concern is to know everyone as an individual and to provide a secure and caring environment so that every child can learn in safety and we can act in their best interests.

There is government guidance set out in [Working Together \(HMG, 2018\)](#) on how agencies must work in partnership to keep children safe. This guidance places a shared and equal duty on three Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Police and Health) to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area under multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. These arrangements sit under the [Essex Safeguarding Children Board](#) (ESCB).

In Essex, the statutory partners are Essex County Council, Essex Police and five of the seven Clinical Commissioning Groups covering the county.

In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (ESCB, 2026) .

This policy sets out how the Proprietors of The Learning Tree are carrying out their responsibilities to “safeguard and promote the welfare of children” in accordance with the following legislation and guidance (*this is not an exhaustive list*):

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (DfE, 2026)

[Working Together](#) (HMG, 2026)

Education Act 2002

[Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex](#) (ESCB, 2026)

[Counter-Terrorism and Security Act \(HMG, 2015\)](#)

[Serious Crime Act 2015](#) (Home Office, 2015)

Children and Social Work Act (2017)

Sexual Offences Act (2003)

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2026)

Data Protection Act 2018

[What to do if you're worried a child is being abused](#) (HMG, 2015)

[Searching, screening and confiscation](#) (DfE, 2018)

Children Act 1989

Children Act 2004

[Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(DfE, 2017\)](#).

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Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (S. 74 - Serious Crime Act 2015)

[Preventing youth violence and gang involvement \(Home Office, 2015\)](#)

Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adult - county lines guidance (Home Office, 2023)

Education Access Team CME / Home Education policy and practice 2026

This policy is applicable to the whole Learning Tree community, including all staff, teaching and non-teaching, volunteers, temporary and non-temporary supply/visiting staff working at The Learning Tree and all children, including any children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In all matters relating to child protection The Learning Tree will follow the procedures laid down by our own LSCB (or where appropriate the relevant child's care plan).

All members of staff have a duty to safeguard the children's welfare and must therefore familiarise themselves and comply at all times with this policy. All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents can happen at any time and anywhere and are required to be alert to any possible concerns. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Aims:

- To ensure that all necessary internal and inter-agency child protection procedures are in place as required when children may be suffering or at risk of "significant harm"
- To give guidance to staff to ensure best practice
(For guidance on the language of safeguarding see Annex D)
- To demonstrate the links with other relevant policies to safeguard the general welfare of children
- To provide a clear statement of The Learning Tree's responsibility in the event of a concern about the conduct of a member of staff
- To identify key individuals and their specific roles

Principles:

- The Learning Tree recognises its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of the children and young people entrusted to its care by establishing a safe and trusting environment in which children can learn and develop.
- The staff and Proprietors of The Learning Tree are committed to establishing and maintaining an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to. We will ensure that children know that there are adults at The Learning Tree who they can approach if they are worried and that the principles of confidentiality are made clear to children. The Learning Tree promotes a positive, supportive and secure ethos, giving children a sense of being valued.
- We recognise that because of the day to day contact with children, staff at The Learning Tree are well placed to observe the signs of possible abuse and there need to be constantly vigilant.

The Learning Tree is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

It is important for children to receive the right help at the right time and **early help** is key to a child's wellbeing in order to address risks and prevent issues escalating. We must not be guilty of failing to act on and refer the early signs of abuse and neglect, poor record keeping, failing to listen to the views of the child, failing to reassess concerns when the situation does not improve, sharing information too slowly and not challenging those who appear not to be taking action.

The Learning Tree recognises its responsibility to discuss with social care/Social Services or the Police any significant concerns about a child which may indicate:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect

Ethos: Our ethos is to promote social and moral well-being, to teach children to take care of and to value themselves, and to think in terms of making a positive contribution to society as adults.

See ANNEX A – **WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE? Types, Patterns, Recognitions and Indicators of abuse and neglect**

In accordance with LSCB procedures these concerns cannot be kept confidential.

- Staff will be able to contribute to any assessment or meeting about the child held under LSCB procedures as required.
- The Learning Tree also recognises its duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and in responding to concerns about possible abuse, including the Police, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Education Welfare Service, Education Psychology Service and other agencies/services coming into The Learning Tree to support individual children/groups of children.

2. TRANSPARENCY

Working in Partnership and Responding to Parents/Guardians/Carers

The Learning Tree works in partnership with parents/guardians/carers, and local authorities if necessary, communicating as clearly as possible with them (in particular with parents for whom English is not their first language) for the best outcomes for children. We use clear statements in our brochures and correspondence and liaise with agencies (in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors) and local teams that are active in supporting families. The Learning Tree prides itself on its respect and mutual tolerance. Parents/Guardians/Carers have an important role in

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supporting the centre. Copies of this policy, together with our other policies relating to issues of child protection are on our web site, and we hope that parents/guardians/carers will always feel able to take up any issues or worries that they may have with The Learning Tree. We will never ignore an allegation of child abuse and will always investigate any concerns thoroughly. Open communications are essential.

The DSL must be notified of a concern before involving parents/guardians/carers in conversations about abuse. Parents/guardians/carers should be informed as soon as possible about any concerns regarding their children. Parents/guardians/carers will usually be told the source of a referral if it comes from a professional agency e.g. an educational setting. However, members of the public can ask to remain anonymous. The parent/guardian/carer will normally be contacted before a referral is made to Children's Social Care (Children's Services). However, if the concern involves alleged or suspected sexual abuse, honour-based violence, fabricated or induced illness or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) has reason to believe that informing the guardian at this stage might compromise the safety of the child, or a staff member, there will be no contact by The Learning Tree prior to the referral (although the reasons for this course of action will be documented on the referral). Where a child sustains a physical injury or is distressed as a result of reported chastisement, or alleges that they have been chastised by the use of an implement or substance, this will immediately be reported for investigation. Referrals to the local authority will be confirmed in writing. The Learning Tree recognises the need to be alert to the risks posed by strangers or others (including the parents, guardians or carers of any children) who may wish to harm children both in and out of The Learning Tree.

Parents/guardians/carers are reminded that in matters of parental contact or residency, The Learning Tree will not act as a mediator for parents. The Learning Tree will seek to protect the interests of the child, first and foremost. Parents who expect The Learning Tree to actively take sides outside the best interests of the child will find that their child is referred to the appropriate relevant agency to protect the child from being at risk of emotional harm. Contact orders (child access) must be given to The Learning Tree by the parents so that these can be meticulously followed, including any timely revisions. Parents are informed of our safeguarding responsibilities; this policy is available on The Learning Tree's website and, on request, from The Learning Tree.

3. SAFER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

The Learning Tree follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff who work with children and acts at all times in compliance with the aim of creating a safer working environment at The Learning Tree. This is intended to deter and identify anyone who may be unsuitable or pose a risk of harm. In addition to carrying out safer recruitment procedures as set out in the DfE's guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026', members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at The Learning Tree including any part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, agency staff, students on placement and visiting staff are subject to the necessary statutory safeguarding checks before starting work to include where necessary a declaration regarding disqualification from working in childcare, including disqualification by association. All volunteers and contractors working regularly during term-time are also subject to the relevant statutory checks. Confirmation is obtained that appropriate safeguarding checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with children attending The Learning Tree at the centre or on another site. These procedures may now allow for different levels of background checks according to whether or not the individual is primarily in an unsupervised

setting or has only occasional contact with children. Evidence of all these checks (the Single Central Record) will be maintained as required by the current Guidance.

In order to verify a candidate's identity, it is important to be sure that the person is who they claim to be, this includes being aware of the potential for individuals changing their name. Best practice is checking the name on their birth certificate, where this is available. Further identification checking guidelines can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Separate barred list checks must only be carried out in the following circumstances:

- for newly appointed staff who are engaging in regulated activity, pending the receipt of an Enhanced Certificate with Barred List information from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (and where all other relevant checks as per paragraph 213 have been carried out); or,
- where an individual has worked in a post in a school or college that brought them into regular contact with children or young persons which ended not more than three months prior to that person's appointment to the organisation (and where all other relevant checks as per paragraph 213 have been carried out).

Visiting Speakers are researched on the internet before the event and a copy of their speech is requested to ensure the content is appropriate. They are asked to produce ID when arriving at The Learning Tree and are supervised on site at all times.

The Proprietors' termly review of safeguarding considers all aspects of safeguarding including policies and procedures.

4. RAISING AWARENESS

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Sarah Baker, is one of the Proprietors of The Learning Tree whose role it is to ensure that safeguarding is always a priority by:

- Championing child protection issues within The Learning Tree and offering challenge if necessary
- Ensuring the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy is checked for impact and reviewed yearly accordingly
- The DSL reports to the other Proprietor on levels of child protection referrals made by The Learning Tree during the past year, outlines the issues that have arisen from cases (whilst respecting confidentiality and not identifying persons by name) and reviews training undertaken by staff. The Learning Tree ensures that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay, once identified. The Proprietors scrutinise the information provided by the DSL and this includes asking both staff and children safeguarding questions. It is for the Proprietors to undertake a formal annual audit of Safeguarding. The Proprietors are accountable for ensuring The Learning Tree has effective child protection policies and procedures in place that are in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State, any ECSB from which children are drawn including the locally agreed inter-agency procedures.

The Learning Tree is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

- To lead and confirm amendments as required to safeguarding arrangements in the light of changing regulations or recommended best practice

Allegations of abuse which become known to staff, volunteers, children and visitors must be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy, following the procedures detailed in paragraphs 6, 7 & 8. All allegations made will be treated seriously and the Social Services Referral Team or the Local Authority Designated Officer will be informed. It must be noted that any staff member may make a referral to Social Care if they feel that it is necessary to keep that child safe from significant harm although they are expected to raise concerns with The Learning Tree's Designated Safeguarding Lead in the first instance.

The diagram below indicates what action should be taken and who should take it where there are concerns about a child. If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. **Anybody can make a referral** and everyone has a responsibility to know how to.

*In cases which also involve an allegation of abuse against the staff member, see part four of KCSIE 2026 this guidance explains action The Learning Tree will take in respect of the staff member.

** Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there will be an inter-agency assessment. These assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who could be a teacher, special educational needs coordinator, General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, and/or health visitor.

** Where there are more complex needs, help may be provided under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need). Where there are child protection concerns local authority services must make enquiries and decide if any action must be taken under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, see Chapter 1 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 for more information.

5. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

As advised in KCISE (2026)) the broad areas of responsibility for the Designated Safeguarding Lead are:

Manage referrals

- Refer cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care;
- Refer cases to the Channel programme where there is a radicalisation concern as required;
- Support staff who make referrals to the Channel programme;
- Refer cases where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- Refer cases where a crime may have been committed to the Police as required

Work with others

- Liaise with the Proprietors to inform them of issues especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations;

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- As required, liaise with the “case manager” (as per Part four KCSIE) and the designated officer(s) at the local authority for child protection concerns (all cases which concern a staff member);
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies. Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for staff.

Undertake training

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and any deputies) should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should undertake Prevent awareness training.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding

developments) at regular intervals, as required, but at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and intervention, for example through locally agreed common and shared assessment processes such as early help assessments;
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so;
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands The Learning Tree’s child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff;
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers;
- Are able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals (Section 17(10) Children Act 1989: those unlikely to achieve a reasonable standard of health and development without local authority services, those whose health and development is likely to be significantly impaired without the provision of such services, or disabled children.)
- Understand and support The Learning Tree with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation;
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures The Learning Tree may put in place to protect them.

Raise Awareness

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure the child protection policies are known, understood and used appropriately;
- Ensure The Learning Tree’s child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with all staff;
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of The Learning Tree in this;

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- Make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest local policies on safeguarding.
- Where children leave The Learning Tree ensure their child protection file is transferred to any new school, if any, as soon as possible. This should be transferred separately from the main child file, ensuring secure transit and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Availability

- During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a deputy) should always be available (during Learning Tree hours) for staff at The Learning Tree to discuss any safeguarding concerns. Whilst generally speaking the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) would be expected to be available in person, or in exceptional circumstances availability via phone and or Zoom or other such mediums is acceptable.
- It is a matter for individual educational settings and the designated safeguarding lead to arrange adequate and appropriate cover arrangements for any out of hours/out of term activities.

Child's Death: In the event of a death of a child/young person the Proprietors must notify both the Essex Local Authority and Children's Social Care.

6. INDUCTION AND TRAINING

The Proprietors will ensure that all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, receive appropriate induction and regular training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, as prescribed in government Guidance and in accordance with the expectations of the LSCB.

The Proprietors also ensure that everyone attends training annually in accordance with KCSIE guidance and receives regular updates with the designated persons receiving training every two years. Training in safeguarding is an important part of the induction process. Training includes a review of The Learning Tree's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Compliance guidance, the identity of the DSL, a copy of Part 1 of KCSIE.

All staff sign to say that they have read and understood KCSIE Part 1 and the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy at regular intervals or when new guidance is issued.

Deficiencies and Weaknesses: It is the duty of all members of Staff and the Proprietors to draw to the attention of the DSL any weakness or deficiencies in this policy which should be remedied immediately. The DSL will ensure that this is then followed up without delay, with policies and procedures being updated as needed rather than waiting to any regular review date.

Educating Children About Safeguarding – please also see PSHE Policy and ONLINE SAFETY Policy

We raise the awareness of children and equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to keep safe by including opportunities through discussion for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse. We also ensure that children know that there are adults at The Learning Tree whom they can approach if they have a concern. We also teach them how to recognise different risks in different situations, and how to behave in response to them. We teach them how they can keep themselves safe, including online, and who to ask for help if their safety is threatened. The outcomes we want the children at The Learning Tree to achieve are to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and to achieve economic well-being. We pride ourselves on our excellent pastoral support structures at The Learning Tree. From time to time staff will base circle time and discussion on related topics.

7. CHILDREN IN NEED/PROVIDING SUPPORT

The Learning Tree will support children in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan as required. The Learning Tree will notify any concerns or changes about a child who has a child protection plan or is known to have an allocated social worker to the child's social worker or in her/his absence the manager or a duty officer in the team and confirm this in writing. The Learning Tree will co-operate with other agencies and the LSCB advice to act in the best interests of the child.

We recognise that children who are abused or who witness violence may experience difficulties which impact on their sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The Learning Tree may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at The Learning Tree their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The Learning Tree acknowledges the additional needs for support and protection of children who are vulnerable by virtue of disability, homelessness, refugee/asylum seeker status, the effects of substance abuse within the family, those who are young carers, mid-year admissions and children who are excluded from school. We acknowledge that children who are affected by abuse or neglect may demonstrate their needs and distress through their words, actions, behaviour, demeanour, work or other children. The Learning Tree has a strong commitment to an anti-bullying policy and will consider all coercive acts and inappropriate child on child behaviour and sexual activity within a Child Protection context.

The Learning Tree will provide support by

- ensuring that the curriculum and ethos of The Learning Tree support the child
- providing sufficient resources and time with regards to safeguarding and releasing staff in order that they can participate in safeguarding/child protection processes, core groups and meetings (especially child protection conferences and child in need meetings).
- ensuring that the attendance of any child subject to a child protection plan, or otherwise believed to be at risk of harm, is closely monitored.
- including specific training to understand the particular safeguarding risks of looked after children during bi-annual safeguarding training.

If a child discloses that he/she has witnessed domestic violence or it is suspected that he/she may be living in a household which is affected by family violence, this will be referred to the DSL as a safeguarding issue

Where it comes to our notice that a child under the age of 11 is, or may be, sexually active, this will result in an immediate referral to Children's Services. This will determine how and when information will be shared with parents and the investigating agencies.

Some children may have an increased risk of abuse. It is important to understand that this increase in risk is due more to societal attitudes and assumptions, and child protection procedures that fail to acknowledge children's diverse circumstances, rather than the individual child's personality, impairment or circumstances. Many factors can contribute to an increase in risk, including prejudice and discrimination, isolation, social exclusion, communication issues and reluctance on the part of some adults to accept that abuse can occur.

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Some groups such as SEN can be disproportionately impacted by bullying/communication barriers/dismissal of signs and indicators as relating to the disability without further exploration.

To ensure that all of the children who attend The Learning Tree receive equal protection, we will give special consideration to children who are:

- disabled or have special educational needs
- young carers
- Looked After Children
- privately fostered children
- affected by domestic abuse
- affected by substance misuse/drug use
- affected by mental health issues including self-harm and eating disorders.
- affected by poor parenting
- at risk of Fabricated or Induced Illness
- at risk of gang and youth violence
- asylum seekers
- living away from home
- susceptible to being bullied, or engaging in bullying including cyber, homophobic, racist etc.
- live transient lifestyles
- LGBT (lesbian gay bisexual transgender)
- missing from home or care
- living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- susceptible to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality
- susceptible to extremism or radicalisation.
- susceptible to faith abuse
- involved directly or indirectly in child sexual exploitation CSE or trafficking
- do not have English as a first language

- at risk of Honour Based Violence (HBV) including genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

This list provides examples of additional vulnerable groups and is not exhaustive.

8. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD

This procedure applies in the case of abuse alleged or suspected to have been carried out by a parent or relative or other person outside The Learning Tree and also in the case of abuse by one child against another.

In the case of abuse alleged or suspected to have been carried out by a member of staff or volunteer, the procedure set out in the following section 9. (Procedure for Responding to Allegations against Staff) should be followed.

The Learning Tree treats the safeguarding of the children in its care as the highest priority and recognises the important role it has to play in the recognition and referral of children who may be at risk. All our staff are made aware of their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in The Learning Tree's care. Staff members are alerted to the particular potential vulnerabilities of looked after children.

Every member of staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting, contract and volunteer staff working at The Learning Tree is required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect to the DSL. This includes alleged abuse by one or more children against another child. In the event of child-on-child abuse, all children involved, whether perpetrator/s or victim/s will be treated as being 'at risk'. Reference should be made to the legal threshold and in addition to the DSL, the Principal and the LADO must be advised. Where the allegation(s) concern the DSL the staff member should report to the Principal / Deputy DSL and/or direct to the Local Authority (see below).

Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm, a referral to local agencies will be made within 24 hours of the safeguarding issue being raised. For children in need of additional support from one or more agencies, the DSL will initiate inter-agency assessment using local processes.

The Children and Families Hub

0345 603 7627

Out of hours Team - 0345 606 1212

Police Emergency - 999

Police Non-Emergency - 101

OFSTED Safeguarding Children

0300 1231231 (Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm) Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk

Disclosure and Barring Service

Tel: 03000 200190

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9. PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ALL DISCLOSURES/ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

If a member of staff is made aware of any allegation of abuse, or if knowledge of possible abuse comes to his/her attention it is his/her duty to listen to the child, to provide re-assurance and to record the child's statements, but not to probe or put words into the child's mouth.

On hearing an allegation of abuse or complaint about abuse directly from a child, a member of staff should limit questioning to the minimum necessary for clarification. Leading questions should be avoided. No inappropriate guarantees of confidentiality should be given; rather the child should be told that the matter will be referred in confidence to the appropriate people in positions of responsibility.

The member of staff should make and submit an accurate written record preferably using the 'Record of Concerns Form' (Annex C) and inform the DSL immediately. The DSL or the deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Children and Families Operations Hub in accordance with the procedures outlined in the SET procedures (ESCB 2026) and in 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex'.

The telephone referral to the Family Operations Hub will be confirmed in writing within 48 hours with the [Children and Families Request for Support form](#). Essential information will include the child's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral plus any other relevant information or advice given.

Wherever possible, The Learning Tree will share any safeguarding concerns, or an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care, with parents or carers. However, we will not do so where it is felt that to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On occasions, it may be necessary to seek advice from the Children and Families Hub and / or Essex Police in making decisions about when it is appropriate to share information with parents / carers.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-consideration of the case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Safeguarding contact details are displayed at The Learning Tree to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support.

If it is suspected that a crime has been committed the matter will be referred to the police from the outset by the DSL. If this isn't believed to be the case, the DSL will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice or direction.

10. Procedure for Responding to Allegations against Staff

Allegations of abuse may be made against a member of staff, the Proprietors, a volunteer, a child, parent or other person connected to The Learning Tree.

Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff will be dealt with according to the statutory guidance set out in part four of KCSIE. If an allegation is made against a member of staff there is an obvious need to act immediately and with utmost discretion.

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The child and/or alleged abuser SHOULD NOT be questioned but a record made of what has been reported. The informant should be told that the matter will be referred in confidence to the appropriate people.

The written record must be passed immediately to the DSL. In the event that an allegation implicates the DSL, the written record should be brought to the immediate attention of the other Proprietor without the DSL being informed.

If the DSL is absent from The Learning Tree and not contactable, the allegations should be brought to the attention of the Deputy DSL.

SET procedures (ESCB, 2026) require that the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Safeguarding Lead immediately inform the Local Authority Designated Officer ("LADO").

If it is decided that an investigation is called for, it is the responsibility of the LADO to arrange a meeting to discuss how the next steps are handled.

The arrangements agreed upon will include informing the parents and seeking their consent for any immediate medical examination if necessary.

The member of staff against whom an allegation has been made would normally be informed as soon as possible after the result of the initial investigation is known, or the decision is made to dispense with one, but not invited to make a response. There should be a warning that anything said will be recorded.

If it is established that the allegation is not well founded, either on the basis of the medical evidence or further statements, then the person against whom the complaint has been made would normally be informed that the matter is closed. The complainant and the parents would also need to be informed of this.

If the Police decide to take the case further and the allegation is against a member of staff, he/she would normally be suspended or, where the circumstances are considered to warrant it, dismissed.

Should the allegation of abuse concern the DSL the member of staff should immediately inform the LADO and Deputy.

If the abuse is alleged or suspected to have been carried out by a child the above procedures will be followed, but in addition the Proprietors must be immediately informed. The Proprietors will follow the procedures set out in the Anti-Bullying Policy and, where appropriate, take advice from the Social Services team in determining what action to take.

The DSL will refer all allegations or suspicions of abuse or cases where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, to the local authority designated officer (LADO) within one working day. The LADO should be contacted on 03330 139 797 or email lado@essex.gov.uk

Borderline cases will be discussed with the LADO without identifying individuals in the first instance and following discussions the LADO will judge whether or not an allegation or concern meet the relevant threshold. The LADO and DSL will decide in the circumstances what further steps should be taken. This could involve informing parents and calling the police.

If the allegation concerns a member of staff, a volunteer or another child he/she would normally be informed as soon as possible after the result of any initial investigation authorised or conducted by the LADO is known. Advice will always be

sought from the LADO first, however. The Learning Tree will normally appoint a member of staff to keep the person informed of the likely course of action and the progress of the case.

The outcome of investigation of an allegation will record whether it is substantiated (sufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), unsubstantiated (insufficient evidence either to prove or disprove it), false (sufficient evidence to disprove it) or malicious (sufficient evidence to disprove it and that there has been a deliberate act to deceive). If it is established that the allegation is malicious, no details of the allegation will be retained on the individual's personnel records. In all other circumstances a written record will be made of the decision and retained on the individual's personnel file in accordance with DfE advice.

If the LADO or any of the statutory safeguarding authorities decide to take the case further, any staff member concerned may be suspended if this is felt appropriate. The reasons and justification for suspension will be recorded and the staff member informed of them. In the case of staff, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure. During the course of the investigation The Learning Tree in consultation with the LADO will decide what information should be given to parents, staff and other children and how press enquiries are to be dealt with.

We follow Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) guidance and procedures regarding referrals and barring decisions and the

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (Prescribed Criteria and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2009. The Learning Tree will report to the DBS, within one month of leaving the centre any person (whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student) whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. This includes dismissal, non-renewal of a fixed term contract, no longer using a supply teacher engaged directly or supplied by an agency, terminating the placement of a trainee or volunteer, no longer using staff employed by a contractor and resignation and voluntary withdrawal from any of the above.

In the event of the Designated Safeguarding Lead not being at The Learning Tree for any reason, any member of staff who has concerns about any child should contact the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed as soon as possible.

11. PROMOTING AWARENESS

Through the curriculum and pastoral systems, staff will raise the children's awareness and build their confidence and resilience so that they have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and that of others, recognising that children need opportunities to develop the skills they need to stay safe from harm. All teaching staff play a vital role in this process, helping to ensure that all children relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable at The Learning Tree. We expect all the teaching staff to lead by example and to play a full part in promoting an awareness that is appropriate to their age amongst all the children at The Learning Tree on issues relating to health, safety and well-being. All staff, including all non-teaching staff, have an important role in insisting that children always adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in our behaviour policy and in enforcing our anti-bullying policy.

Time is allocated to discussions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour and on why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right. Group discussions are used to promote tolerance and mutual respect and understanding.

All children know that there are adults to whom they can turn to if they are worried. If The Learning Tree has concerns about a child there is always a recognised requirement for sensitive communication and designated staff members are aware of the need to avoid asking leading questions.

Sharing information or images with other agencies, on the website or in the press

- The Learning Tree may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. We operate the following policy regarding the use of photographs, to ensure the privacy and safety of children at The Learning Tree: where a child is named, no photograph of that child is displayed; where a photograph is used which shows a child, no name is displayed and where children are named, only their first names are given.
- The Learning Tree follows a policy of seeking parents' permission before using images which show children on the website or in the local press. The list showing children who are barred from appearing in the press, or on the website, is kept by The Learning Tree and is available whenever photographers are present. No other private information about children is ever published on the website such as surnames or contact details. By observing these points, The Learning Tree ensures that visitors to the website cannot link images of children to names of children. When choosing photographs for the website, we are mindful of the way children may appear in them and will not include images which are in any way inappropriate.

12. POSITION OF TRUST

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in a position of trust in relation to the young people in their care which they have a public duty to maintain by keeping them safe. A relationship between a member of staff and a child cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to anyone about a safeguarding concern (including parents / carers or children), or promise to keep a secret. In accordance with statutory requirements, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and may require further referral to and subsequent investigation by appropriate authorities.

Information on individual child protection cases may be shared by the designated lead (or deputy) with other relevant staff members. This will be on a 'need to know' basis only and where it is in the child's best interests to do so.

13. ACTION IF A CHILD IS MISSING FROM EDUCATION, HOME OR CARE

Every precaution is taken, through the use of risk assessments and thorough planning and supervision, to ensure that children are safe both at The Learning Tree and on outings. However, there are limited situations where a child could become lost. Should a child become lost the member of staff in charge is alerted, the safety of other children is paramount and they are sufficiently supervised, the police and parents are informed and the area where the child was last seen is continuously searched. When the situation has been resolved, staff review the reasons for it happening and take measures to ensure that it does not happen again.

The Learning Tree works closely with parents and agencies and we are alert to the potential signs of children going missing. We keep track of children who regularly go missing, or become missing for any period of time. We listen to young people and take any disclosure seriously, sharing information with agencies.

All pupils are placed on both the Admissions and Attendance Register.

Attendance is checked twice per day and an explanation for any absence is sought immediately.

A record is kept by the tuition centre of any instances in which a child is absent without satisfactory explanation.

14. EQUAL TREATMENT

We are committed to equal treatment for all children regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. We keep a record of racist incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each child. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our children e.g participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and playtimes.

15. BULLYING INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING AND PEER ON PEER ABUSE

Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our children and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and The Learning Tree. Bullying is a very serious issue that can cause considerable anxiety and distress. At its most serious level, bullying can have a disastrous effect on a child's wellbeing and in very rare cases has been a feature in the suicide of some young people.

All incidences of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying will be recorded and reported and will be managed through our behaviour and tackling anti-bullying procedures. All children and parents receive a copy of the procedures on joining The Learning Tree and the subject of bullying is addressed at regular intervals in PSHE education and through assemblies and meetings. If the bullying is particularly serious, or the tackling bullying procedures are deemed to be ineffective, the Proprietors and the DSL will consider implementing child protection procedures.

Bullying incidents including discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour e.g. racist, disability and homophobic bullying and use of derogatory language will be recorded and analysed. There will be occasions when a child's behaviour warrants a response under child protection rather than anti-bullying procedures.

The Learning Tree is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The anti-bullying policy is available on The Learning Tree website.

There are many issues of concern affecting children today and not all can be listed here. The issues are often complex and overlap, e.g. example drug use/alcohol misuse/truancy.

We will have a consistent approach of following our procedures and consulting with other agencies if there are any concerns with any of the children who attend The Learning Tree.

Online safety is exceptionally important and will continue to receive a high priority as an issue, as it is often how issues are facilitated CSE, radicalisation, bullying etc. Appropriate filters and monitoring are in place, as well as education of staff and children. See section on Induction and Training.

Peer on Peer Abuse – sexting/cyberbullying/sexual assaults

The Learning Tree recognises that some children may abuse their peers and any incidents of peer on peer abuse will be managed in the same way as any other child protection concern and will follow the same procedures. We will seek advice and support from other agencies as appropriate. Peer on peer abuse can manifest itself in many ways. This may include bullying (including cyber bullying), physical abuse, sexual violence / sexual harassment, up-skirting, 'sexting' or initiation / hazing type violence and rituals. This will always be taken seriously and acted upon, under the appropriate policy e.g. safeguarding, bullying, not dismissed as 'banter' or 'part of growing up'. These issues will be part of group discussions. Victims and perpetrators will be supported through our pastoral system. The Learning Tree understands the different gender issues that can be prevalent when dealing with peer-on-peer abuse. Any hate crime/incident will be reported through local reporting mechanisms.

Sexting – Although children do not have mobile phones at The Learning Tree, staff will be aware of updated guidance and what can happen outside of The Learning Tree.

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm. Behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking and or alcohol misuse, deliberately absent from education and consensual and non-consensual sharing of nude and semi-nude images and/or videos can be a sign that children are at risk.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation>

Serious violence

All staff are aware of indicators which may signal that children are at risk from or involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from The Learning Tree, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in well-being, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that a child has been approached by, or is involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

For other key definitions of abuse. See Annex A

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16. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Copies of The Learning Tree's complaints procedure can be sent to any parent on request. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under The Learning Tree's Complaints Procedure.

17. WHISTLEBLOWING

If a member of staff has concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a child, he or she should report it at once to the DSL (or to the Deputy DSL when the concern relates to the DSL). Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under The Learning Tree's whistleblowing procedures. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the statutory authorities will always be informed. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the child, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it. For more information see our Whistle Blowing Policy. Staff may also raise issues directly outside The Learning Tree.

All members of staff and the wider Learning Tree community should be able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and feel confident any concern will be taken seriously by the Proprietors. We have 'whistleblowing' procedures in place and these are available in our Whistleblowing Policy. However, for any member of staff who feels unable to raise concerns internally, or where they feel their concerns have not been addressed, they may contact the [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/help/whistleblowing-helpline) on: 0808 800 5000 or by email at: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Parents or others in the wider Learning Tree community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk. You must whistleblow on anyone who puts children at risk. It is your duty. Whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk.

Phone this number: On Duty Referrals **0300 1231231**

Interagency working

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure that The Learning Tree is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference called for children on The Learning Tree roll or previously known to them. Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). The member of staff attending the meeting will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns The Learning Tree has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection or a Child in Need plan, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure the child is monitored regarding their attendance, emotional well-being, academic progress, welfare and presentation. If The Learning Tree is part of the core group, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure The Learning Tree is represented, provides appropriate information and contributes to the plan at these meetings. Any concerns about the Child Protection plan and / or the child's welfare will be discussed and recorded at the core group meeting, unless to do so would place the child at further risk of significant harm. In this case the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the child's key worker immediately and then record that they have done so and the actions agreed.

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18. TRANSFER OF CHILD PROTECTION RECORDS AND RECORD KEEPING

- Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse in a child or young person, will make notes as soon as possible (within the hour), writing down as exactly as possible using the child's own words (if appropriate, using a body map to record) , what was said or seen, putting the scene into context, and giving the time and location. Dates and times of events should be recorded as accurately as possible, together with a note of when the record was made. All records must be signed and dated clearly. Children will not be asked to make a written statement themselves or to sign any records.
- All records of a child protection nature (handwritten or typed) will be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and are kept in an individual child protection file for that child (which is separate to the child's file). This includes child protection conference minutes and written records of any concerns. Access to any records will be on a 'need to know 'basis. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained for 25 years after the child's date of birth, or until they transfer to another educational setting.
- When a child who has had a child protection plan leaves The Learning Tree and/or transfers to another school, the DSL will inform the child's new school (if any) immediately and discuss with the child's social worker the transfer of any confidential information The Learning Tree may hold.
- In line with statutory guidance, when children transfer between educational settings or move part way through an academic year, all information about any past or current child protection concerns will, be sent confidentially to the DSL of the receiving school/college. Any records that cannot be passed on will be retained confidentially until at least the child's 25th birthday or as required.

19. OFF-SITE VISITS

Appropriate risk assessments must be in place prior to any off-site visit taking place.

20. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THIS POLICY

The Learning Tree monitors and evaluates its Safeguarding policy and procedures through the following activities:

- Proprietors discussion sessions with children and staff
- Frequent scrutiny of attendance data
- Regular analysis of a range of risk assessments

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- Logs of bullying and/or racist behaviour incidents are reviewed regularly by the Proprietors
- The Proprietors, meet termly to review all aspects of safeguarding including policies and procedures
- Regular review of parental concerns

Signed

Louise Self and Sarah Baker

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

THIS POLICY IS REVIEWED ANNUALLY (OR SOONER IF REQUIRED BY CHANGES TO LEGISLATION) BY THE PROPRIETORS

A COPY OF THIS POLICY IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST FROM THE LEARNING TREE

ANNEX A – WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE? Types, Patterns, Recognitions and indicators of abuse and neglect

ANNEX B – Staff code of conduct

ANNEX C – Record of concern and body map

ANNEX D = The language of safeguarding and child protection

Annex E – Aspects of the Safer Recruitment Policy that are relevant to this policy

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ANNEX A – WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE? Types, Patterns, Recognitions and indicators of abuse and neglect

See the following advice - 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

and Safeguarding Children from Abuse Linked to Belief in Spirit Possession

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFES-00465-2007.pdf>

Child abuse can fall within the following categories:

- Abuse - a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional community setting by those known to them or more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet) . They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- Physical Abuse – a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
 - Fabricated or Induced Illness – Physical harm caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.
 - Harm caused by culture, faith and beliefs - is defined for the purposes of this policy as the belief that an evil force has entered a child and is controlling him. Sometimes the term 'witch' is used and is defined here as the belief that a child is able to use an evil force to harm others. There is also a range of other language that is connected to such abuse. This includes black magic, kindoki, ndoki, the evil eye, djinns, voodoo, obeah, demons, and child sorcerers. In all these cases, genuine beliefs can be held by families, carers, religious leaders, congregations, and the children themselves that evil forces are at work. Families and children can be deeply worried by the evil that they believe is threatening them, and abuse often occurs when an attempt is made to 'exorcise', or 'deliver' the child. Exorcism is defined here as attempting to expel evil spirits from a child. The abuse usually occurs in the household where the child lives. It may also occur in a place of worship where alleged 'diagnosis' and 'exorcism' may take place.
 - Female Genital Mutilation – Staff need to be aware of what this is. (FGM) The partial or total removal of external female genitalia, practice in some cultures. Teachers cannot examine, but only raise concerns with the DSL. Guidance can be found here;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/female-genital-mutilation-guidelines>.
Mandatory Reporting of FGM is in place and procedural information can be found here;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information>. If you become aware of a case, legislation requires you to make a report to the police. It is recommended that you make a report orally **by calling the police using the non-emergency number 101.**
- Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or

- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse, which can happen to boys and girls from any background or community. In Essex, the definition of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) from the Department of Education (DfE, 2026) has been adopted:
- *"Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology".*
- CSE can occur over time or be a one-off occurrence, and may happen without the child's immediate knowledge e.g. through others sharing videos or images of them on social media.
- CSE can affect any child, who has been coerced into engaging in sexual activities. This includes 16 and 17 year olds who can legally consent to have sex. Some children may not realise they are being exploited e.g. they believe they are in a genuine romantic relationship.
- It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. The Learning Tree is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead is the named CSE Lead at The Learning Tree on these issues and will work with other agencies as appropriate.
- Child criminal exploitation Child criminal exploitation is a geographically widespread form of harm which is a typical feature of county lines criminal activity (county lines is when drug networks or gangs groom and exploit children to carry drugs and money from urban areas to suburban areas and seaside towns). The Learning Tree works with key partners locally to prevent and respond to child criminal exploitation.
- Some specific forms of CCE can include children being forced or manipulated into transporting drugs or money through county lines, working in cannabis factories, shoplifting or pickpocketing. They can also be forced or manipulated into committing vehicle crime or threatening/committing serious violence to others.
- Children can become trapped by this type of exploitation as perpetrators can threaten victims (and their families) with violence, or entrap and coerce them into debt. They may be coerced into carrying weapons such as knives or begin to carry a knife for a sense of protection from harm from others. As children involved in criminal exploitation often commit crimes themselves, their vulnerability as victims is not always recognised by adults and professionals, (particularly older children), and they are not treated as victims despite the harm they have experienced. They may still have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears to be something they have agreed or consented to.
- It is important to note that the experience of girls who are criminally exploited can be very different to that of boys. The indicators may not be the same, however professionals should be aware that girls are at risk of criminal exploitation too. It is also important to note that both boys and girls being criminally exploited may be at higher risk of sexual exploitation.
- NB Further information about CCE including definitions and indicators is included in Annex A

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Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse that occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into taking part in sexual or criminal activity, in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or through violence or the threat of violence. CSE and CCE can affect children, both male and female and can include children who have been moved (commonly referred to as trafficking) for the purpose of exploitation.

- Contextual safeguarding

Safeguarding incidents and behaviours can be associated with factors outside The Learning Tree. All staff are aware of contextual safeguarding and the fact they should consider whether wider environmental factors present in a child's life are a threat to their safety and / or welfare. To this end, we will consider relevant information when assessing any risk to a child and share it with other agencies to support better understanding of a child and their family.

- Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can take many forms, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional. The Learning Tree recognises that exposure to domestic abuse can have a serious, long-term emotional and psychological impact on children. We work with other key partners and will share relevant information where there are concerns that domestic abuse may be an issue for a child or family or be placing a child at risk of harm.

- Neglect – the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

- Emotional Abuse – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve

- serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Further information on Preventing Radicalisation - Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of The Learning Tree's wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. During the process of radicalisation it is possible to intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support

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terrorism and forms of extremism. There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. It can happen in many different ways and settings. Specific background factors may contribute to vulnerability which are often combined with specific influences such as family, friends or online, and with specific needs for which an extremist or terrorist group may appear to provide an answer. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include making a referral to the Channel programme. For advice and support on extremism, contact Essex Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0345 603 7627 or the police on the non-emergency number 101.

Further information on the following specific safeguarding issues can be found on the TES website and the NSPCC website. Broad government guidance is also available via the GOV.UK website. There is some brief further information at the end of this Annex A

- Forced Marriage
- Domestic Violence
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Mental health
- Private fostering
- Sexting
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Trafficking

So-called 'honour-based violence' (including Female Genital Mutilation and forced marriage)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse.

As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) **to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.** The Learning Tree will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with local safeguarding procedures.

A **forced marriage** is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

Mental health

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy.

Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse

These are some of the signs and symptoms and types of behaviour which may indicate that a child is being abused. In themselves they may not be proof of abuse, but they may suggest abuse if a child exhibits several of them or if a pattern emerges. There is a good deal of overlap between the signs and symptoms of the different categories of abuse.

Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression, bullying
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Running away

- Significant inexplicable changes in behaviour
- Deterioration of work
- Unexplained pattern of absence, which may serve to hide injuries

Possible signs of Fabricated Illness

- The only person noticing the symptoms is the parent or carer
- Exaggerating or fabricating symptoms to suggest the presence of an illness

- Repeatedly being absent for apparent medical reasons

Possible signs of harm caused by culture, faith or beliefs

- Beating, shaking, burning, cutting, stabbing, semi-strangulation, tying up the child, rubbing chilli peppers or other substances on the child's genitals or eyes or placing chilli peppers or other substances in the child's mouth
- Not allowing the child to eat or share a room with family members or threatening to abandon them
- Telling a child that they are possessed

Failure to ensure appropriate medical care, supervision, regular attendance, good hygiene, nourishment, clothing

Possible signs of neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging
- Constant tiredness

Possible signs of sexual abuse

- Bruises, scratches or bite marks on the body
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown, for example, in drawings, vocabulary, games etc.
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or to go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends

Possible signs of emotional abuse:

- Low self-esteem
- Changes in behaviour
- Withdrawal
- Extreme aggression or passivity
- Air of detachment - 'I don't care'
- Mistrust of adults
- Over-compliance
- Social isolation
- Frequent tummy pains and other pains
- Repression
- Depression
- Self-inflicted injuries
- Running away
- Reluctance to go home
- High level of attention-seeking behaviour
- Flinching from contact

- Sudden speech disorders

Possible signs of bullying:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting and punching
- Verbal name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, humiliation and continuous ignoring of individuals
- Racial taunts, graffiti and gestures
- Sexual and abusive comments and unwanted physical contact
- Abusive telephone calls, text messages or e-mails

The NSPCC's child protection fact sheet "Signs of Abuse" (www.nspcc.org.uk/signsofabuse).

NSPCC factsheet - April 2014

Recognising signs of abuse at different stages of a child's development

This factsheet describes signs of abuse in the context of stages of child development. It aims to help anyone working with children to distinguish between normal child behaviour and those injuries and behaviours which might indicate abuse.

What is child abuse?

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect
- emotional abuse.

Sometimes children are sexually abused by other children.

Child abuse definitions

Physical abuse: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities

may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as

masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect often happens at the same time as other types of abuse (Daniel et al, 2011; Rees et al, 2011).

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

General signs of abuse

Abused children may be afraid to tell anybody about the abuse. They may struggle with feelings of guilt, shame or confusion – particularly if the abuser is a parent, caregiver or other close family member or friend. Anyone working with children or young people needs to be vigilant to the signs listed below.

Whilst these signs do not necessarily mean that a child is being abused, they probably indicate that the child or family is having some problems which should be investigated.

- Regularly experiencing nightmares or sleeping problems.
- Changes in personality.
- Outbursts of anger.
- Changes in eating habits.
- Showing an inexplicable fear of particular places or making excuses to avoid particular people.
- Self-harming (includes head banging, scratching, cutting).

The Learning Tree is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

- Not receiving adequate medical attention after injuries.
- Showing violence to animals, toys, peers or adults.
- Knowledge of "adult issues" e.g. alcohol, drugs, sexual behaviour.
- Lacking in confidence or often wary/anxious.
- Regressing to the behaviour of younger children.
- Regular flinching in response to sudden but harmless actions, e.g., someone raising a hand quickly.

Whether or not a child's behaviour or appearance is concerning depends on their age or stage of development. Below are signs of potential abuse to look out for in children of specific age groups. Remember that children with learning difficulties, physical disabilities or health-related issues may be at a different developmental stage to most of their peers. However, children who have experienced abuse or neglect from a young age may also display developmental delays compared to children their own age. In such cases, the lack of a clear medical explanation for these delays may be an indicator of abuse.

Infancy to preschool

- Doesn't cry or respond to parent's presence or absence from an early age (usually because they have learnt that their parent will not respond to their distress, this is known as a lack of attachment).
- Late in reaching developmental milestones such as learning to speak, with no medical reason.
- Acting out excessive violence with other children.
- Significantly underweight but eats well when given food.
- Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.

Middle childhood

- Talks of being left home alone or with strangers.
- Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- Shows lack of attachment to a parent.
- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- Acting out excessive violence with other children.

School age (5 to 16 years)

- Reluctant to go home at the end of The Learning Tree day.
- Unable to bring friends home or reluctant for professionals to visit the family home.
- Poor attendance and punctuality, or late being picked up.
- Parents show little interest in child's performance and behaviour at The Learning Tree.
- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns.
- Is reluctant to get changed for PE etc.
- Wets or soils the bed.
- Acting out excessive violence with other children.

Adolescence

- Drinks alcohol regularly from an early age.
- Is concerned for younger siblings without explaining why.
- Becomes secretive and reluctant to share information.
- Talks of running away.
- Shows challenging/disruptive behaviour at The Learning Tree
- Is reluctant to get changed for PE etc.

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Physical abuse

It is normal for children to have cuts and bruises on their bodies caused by accidents which happen whilst they are moving about and/or playing. These are marks that have an acceptable and reasonable explanation.

Marks or injuries which do not have an acceptable explanation may indicate that a child has been abused. This may include:

Bruising

- Bruises on the cheeks, ears, palms, arms and feet.
- Bruises on the back, buttocks, tummy, hips and backs of legs.
- Multiple bruises in clusters, usually on the upper arms or outer thighs.
- Bruising which looks like it has been caused by fingers, a hand, or an object i.e. belt, shoe etc.
- Large oval shaped bite marks.

Burns or scalds

- Any burns which have a clear shape of an object, e.g. cigarette burns.
- Burns to the backs of hands, feet, legs, genitals, or buttocks.

Other signs of physical abuse include multiple injuries (i.e. bruising, fractures) inflicted at different times. It is particularly concerning if parents/carers are unable to explain these injuries and it is not clear whether they took the child to receive medical treatment at the time of the injury.

Be vigilant to possible abuse if a child is frequently described as ill by their parent but does not have any symptoms which are obvious to others. In addition, the parent will be unable to provide details of a medical diagnosis for the child's apparent condition.

Find out more about fabricated or induced illness

There are other signs and indicators of abuse that are age specific.

Infancy to pre-school

- Unexplained head injuries to a baby.
- Bruises on babies who are not yet crawling or walking.
- Acting out excessive violence either with toys or peers.

Sexual abuse

It is normal for children to show signs of sexual behaviour at each stage in their development. Children also develop at different rates and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Behaviours which might be concerning depend on the child's age and the situation.

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‘Normal’ sexual behaviour in children:

Infancy to pre-school

- Kisses and hugs others.
- Is curious about and looks at other's private body parts; has limited understanding of privacy needs.
- Talks about private body parts.
- Uses words such as 'poo', 'bum' and 'willy' freely.
- Plays 'house' or 'doctor' games.
- Shows, touches, or rubs own genitals, or masturbates as a 'comfort' habit.

Middle childhood

- Kisses and hugs others.
- Displays an interest in others' private body parts but is aware of the need for privacy.
- Talks about and occasionally shows private body parts to others.
- Uses words such as 'poo', 'bum' and 'willy' freely and delights in being 'shocking'.
- Sometimes uses swear words and/or 'sex' words copied from others.
- Plays 'house' or 'doctor' games.
- Sometimes touches or rubs own genitals, or masturbates as a comfort habit.

Pre-adolescent children (aged 10 to 12 years)

- Kisses, hugs, and may 'date' others.
- Is interested in others' private body parts and in the changes occurring in puberty, is aware of the need for privacy.
- May ask questions about relationships and sexual behaviour.
- May look at sexual pictures including internet images.
- Masturbates in private.

Adolescents (aged 13 to 16 years)

- Kisses, hugs, dates others, may have longer term relationships.
- Is interested in and asks questions about body parts, relationships and sexual behaviour. Is aware of the need for privacy.
- Uses sexual language and talks about sexual acts with peers.
- May look at sexual pictures including internet images.
- Masturbates in private.
- Experiments sexually with adolescents of similar age.

The following are age-specific signs and indicators of sexual abuse:

Infancy to pre-school

- Talking about sexual acts or using sexually explicit language.
- Having sexual contact with other children.
- Using toys or other objects in a sexual way.
- Becoming withdrawn or very clingy.
- Physical signs such as anal or vaginal soreness or an unusual discharge.

Middle childhood

- Masturbating in public.
- Showing adult-like sexual behaviour or knowledge.
- Using toys or other objects in a sexual way.
- Becoming withdrawn or very clingy.
- Physical signs such as anal or vaginal soreness or an unusual discharge.

Adolescence

- Masturbating in public.
- Having sexual contact with younger children or older adults.
- Pregnancy when the child does not have a boyfriend.
- Sexually transmitted diseases.

Neglect

It is important to remember that some children are very picky eaters whilst others may refuse to wear a coat regardless of how cold it is outside. A child may also appear to be underweight, but is, in fact, naturally thin.

Some of the most obvious signs of neglect (e.g. children being thin, dirty or not wearing a coat) are not in themselves indicators of abuse. However, if, over time, it is clear that a child is not receiving an adequate level of care and supervision appropriate to their age, it may indicate that the child is being neglected. The following are general and age-specific signs of neglect.

General signs of neglect for children of all age groups:

- medical needs are not being met: not being registered with a G.P.; not being taken to the dentist despite having obvious dental problems; failing to ensure that The Learning Tree has a child's medication, e.g. asthma inhalers
- not taking the child to see a doctor when they are ill or have been injured.

There are other signs and indicators of neglect that are age-specific.

Infancy to pre-school

- Frequent and untreated nappy rash.
- Child has numerous accidental injuries and the explanations given suggest a lack of supervision.
- Immunisations are not up to date.
- Child is significantly underweight but eats well when observed.

Middle childhood

- Child has poor attendance and punctuality and is often picked up late at the end of the day.
- A child is frequently tired at The Learning Tree due to a lack of routine at home (e.g. regular bedtimes).
- Parents are unsupportive and uninterested in the child's education or behaviour.
- A child frequently appears to be hungry and does not have a packed lunch or money to buy food.

Adolescence

- A child is often tired at The Learning Tree due to a lack of routine at home (e.g. regular bedtimes).
- A child frequently appears to be hungry and does not have a packed lunch or money to buy food.
-

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- Parents are dismissive and non-responsive to professional concerns (e.g. the need for medical care or taking action over bullying).

Emotional abuse

It is important to remember that some children are naturally open and affectionate whilst others are quieter and more self-contained. Children also develop at different rates from one another and some may be slightly more or less advanced than other children in their age group. Mood swings and challenging behaviour are also a normal part

of growing up for teenagers and children going through puberty. Be alert to behaviours which appear to be out of character for the individual child.

The following signs may indicate emotional abuse for children of all age groups:

- inappropriate knowledge of 'adult' matters such as sex, alcohol and drugs
- extreme emotional outbursts
- regularly experiencing nightmares or sleep difficulties.

There are other signs and indicators of emotional abuse that are age specific.

Infancy to pre-school

- Over-affectionate towards strangers or people they haven't known for very long.
- Lacks confidence and is often wary or anxious.
- Displays lack of attachment to parent, e.g. when being taken to or collected from nursery etc.
- Is frequently aggressive or nasty towards other children and animals.

Middle childhood

- Frequently soils the bed.
- Language and behaviour are not socially appropriate.
- Struggles to control strong emotions.
- Shows lack of attachment to a parent.
- Lacks social skills and has few if any friends.
- Self-harms, e.g. scratching, head banging.

OTHER TYPES OF ABUSE OF CURRENT CONCERN

Honour Based Violence HBV – e.g. FGM/Forced Marriage.

Female Genital Mutilation FGM

This is illegal and a form of child abuse. It involves a procedure to remove all or some of the female genitalia or any other injury to these organs. Staff will be aware of the signs and indicators of this and their legal duty to report known cases to the police.

Forced Marriage

Is illegal and a form of child abuse. A marriage entered into without the full and free consent of one or both parties, where violence treats or coercion is used.

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Multi agency guidelines;

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322307/HMG_MULTI_AGE_NCY_PRACTICE_GUIDELINES_v1_180614_FINAL.pdf

Preventing Radicalisation

This is part of our wider safeguarding duty. We will intervene where possible to prevent vulnerable children being radicalised. The internet has become a major factor in radicalisation and recruitment.

As with all other forms of abuse, staff should be confident in identifying children at risk and act proportionately.

We will work with other partners including the Channel Panel.

The DSL is appropriately trained and be able to offer advice, support and information to other staff.

We will ensure safe internet filters are in place and ensure our children are educated in online safety.

<http://educateagainsthate.com/>

Private Fostering

A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a local authority) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (*Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins.)

The Learning Tree will follow the legal requirements of reporting as set out by the LSCB.

Dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dealing-with-issues-relating-to-parental-responsibility>

Domestic Abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Children with sexually harmful behaviour

Research suggests that up to 40 per cent of child sexual abuse is committed by someone under the age of 18.

The management of children and young people with sexually harmful behaviour is complex and will The Learning Tree work with other agencies to maintain the safety of the whole Learning Tree community. Young

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people who display such behaviour may be victims of abuse themselves and the child protection procedures will be followed for both victim and perpetrator. Staff who become concerned about a child's sexual behaviour should speak to the DSL as soon as possible.

ONLINE SAFETY SUPPORT www.saferinternet.org.uk www.internetmatters.org

www.pshe-association.org.uk

educateagainsthate.com

www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-social-media-for-online-radicalisation

ANNEX B

STAFF BEHAVIOUR AND CODE OF CONDUCT /STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

In general, children should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardian's issues that are troubling them. It may be appropriate to suggest that a child sees their tutor.

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all children with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between tutor and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one child on his/her own in a car, unless absolutely necessary.

Confidentiality & Information Sharing

The over-riding principle is that the welfare of the child is paramount. Privacy and confidentiality must be respected where possible, provided that doing so does not leave a child at risk of harm.

Staff and other adults who have a concern about a child have a responsibility to share the relevant information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Safeguarding Officers, who may in turn share that information with other professionals. Sensitive information should be shared with the minimum number of people possible in order to properly investigate and resolve the concern.

Staff should not promise to keep secret information given to them by a child, but should explain that they will pass the information only to those who need to know and can help.

The following "golden rules" for information sharing are taken from Government guidance:

- Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information. It provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
- Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
- Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
- Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.

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- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
- Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose. If you decide not to share, then record why.

Mobile Phones

The Learning Tree believes that keeping children safe is of paramount importance. We also seek to ensure that everyone at The Learning Tree is safeguarded against allegations and works to high standards of professionalism. Practitioners, tutors, volunteers, students and other visitors to The Learning Tree, who will be in areas where children are present, are asked to switch off their mobile phones and to keep them in their bag or pocket as appropriate.

Mobile phones and cameras

Mobile phones should not be used when supervising or tutoring children except in cases of emergency. If a phone/camera is to be used for Learning Tree purposes, permission must be obtained from the Proprietors and reference to their use and subsequent safety of data must be referred to on the trip risk assessment. Images must be deleted as soon as practicable, having been saved to a Learning Tree device, and not stored on the phone or camera.

Consent will be obtained from parents in order for photographs to be taken and used for evidence or recording achievements. Consent will be obtained for use on the Learning Tree website or in publicity material. Please ensure you are aware of those children for whom permission has not been granted. Any photography or videoing of children will be done by staff/parent/carers and must always take place in full view of others.

Cameras and mobile phones are not permitted in toilet areas.

Communication with Children

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to children, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a child by telephone, they should use The Learning Tree's telephone and email using the Learning Tree system. They should not communicate with children using social networking sites, even on educational matters, but should use official email and networking sites sanctioned by The Learning Tree. Staff should be circumspect in their private use of social networking sites and must not discuss Learning Tree business or issues on their personal social networking site or risk breaching confidentiality about the children.

Physical contact with children

There is an absolute ban on the use by any member of staff of any form of corporal punishment. This includes any physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a child, or any action which is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation.

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There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional

judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with children and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by children or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or of the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

Physical Restraint

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself, another or to property, prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at The Learning Tree or among any children receiving education at the Learning Tree, whether during a tutoring session or otherwise or committing an offence and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL who will decide what to do next. Parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Use of physical interventions:

- There is an absolute ban on the use by any member of staff of any form of corporal punishment. This includes any physical contact which is deliberately intended to punish a child, or any action which is primarily intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation.
- It is important to allow children to do what they can for themselves, but depending on age and circumstances it may be necessary for some physical contact to take place; (e.g. a child who is hurt, who needs instruction in the use of a particular instrument/piece of equipment, safety issues such as the need to prevent a child hurting themselves, running into the road etc.),
- Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enables staff to use 'reasonable force' to prevent a child from:
 - a. committing any offence (or, for a child under the age of criminal responsibility, what would be an offence for an older child);
 - b. causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the child himself); or prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at The Learning Tree or among any children receiving education at The Learning Tree, whether during the tutoring session or otherwise.
- Learning Tree staff may also be empowered to carry out physical searches for weapons, illegal drugs, pornography etc. Actions by staff must at all times be in accordance with guidance and procedures. In the event of searches or physical restraint being needed, parents will be informed the same day.

Staff taking medication or other substances

Staff members may not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for children. If any member of staff is taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children, those practitioners should seek medical advice and should inform the Proprietors. An example of this might be medication which makes you drowsy, which could compromise a child's safety, or affects your eye sight, meaning that you should not dispense medicine to children. The Proprietors will review the medical advice, in consultation with the member of staff. The Learning Tree will only allow practitioners to work directly with children if the medical advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair that staff member's ability to look after children properly. Should a member of staff need to bring their medication to The Learning Tree with them, it must be securely stored, out of the reach of children at all times.

ANNEX C

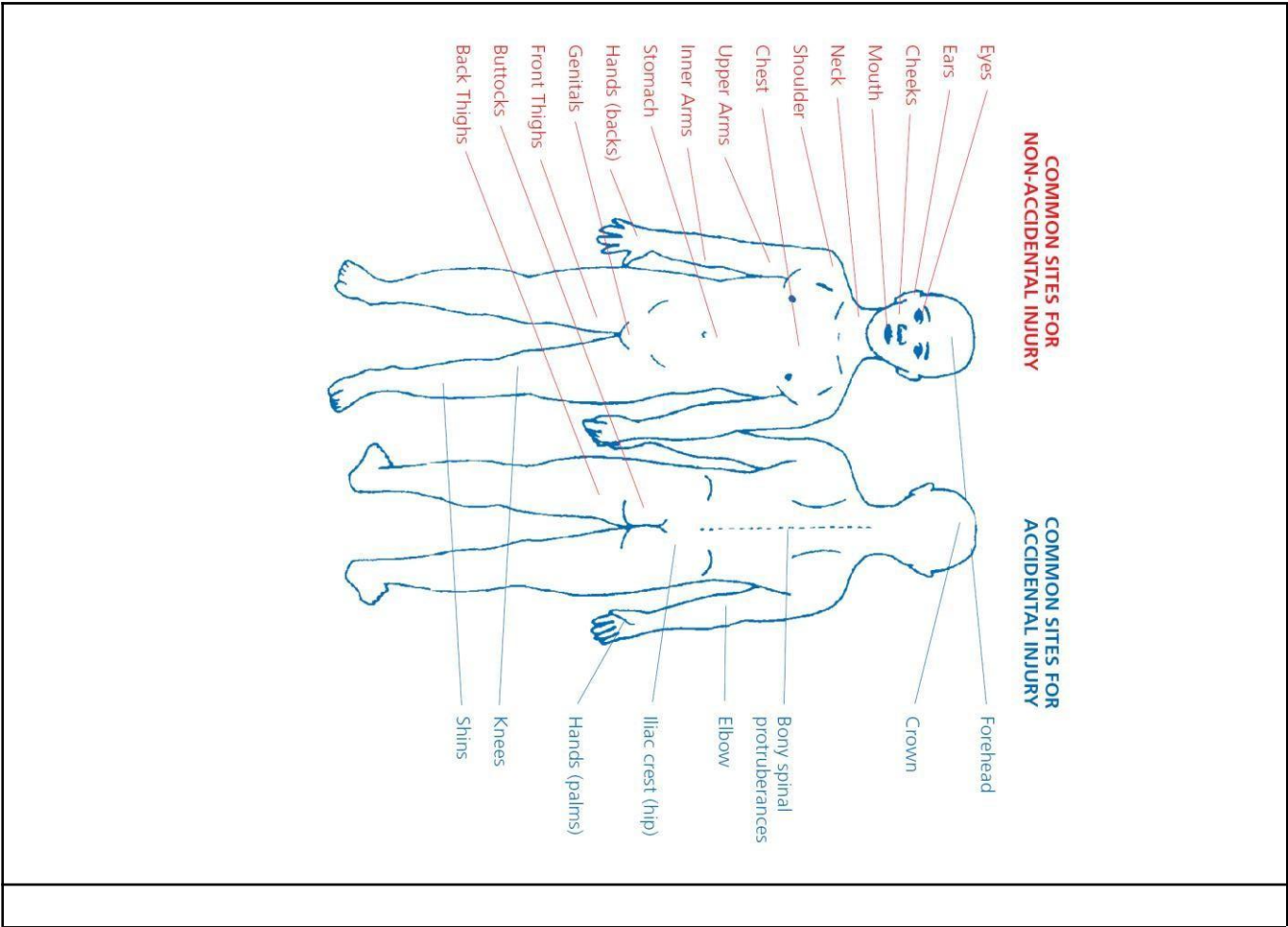
CHILD PROTECTION RECORD – Report of a Concern

Name of referrer:		Role of referrer:	
Child Name:			
Date of birth:		Year Group / class:	

Details of concern:	<i>(Use body map if appropriate)</i>		
Reported to:		Role of person reported to:	
Signed:			
Date:			

Action taken:		Advice sought: <i>(from whom and what was advice given)</i>	
Concern / referral discussed with parent / carer?		<i>If not, state reasons why – if yes, note discussion with parent</i>	
Referral made:		<i>If not, state reasons why – if yes, record to whom and any action agreed</i>	
Feedback to referring member of staff:			By whom
Response to / action taken with child:			By whom
Name and contact number of key workers:			
Name and contact details of GP:			

Please circle location of injury/s. PLEASE NOTE: You should only view parts of the child's body which are normally visible.



ANNEX D The Language of Safeguarding and Child Protection

Child/Children include everyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children refers to the process of protecting children from maltreatment, preventing the impairment of health or development, ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. It can also include issues such as health and safety, use of reasonable force, meeting the needs of children with medical conditions, providing first aid, educational visits, intimate care and emotional well-being, online safety and associated issues and security – taking into account local context.

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is one very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm. Safeguarding, in addition to child protection, encompasses issues such as child health and safety, bullying/cyber-bullying, appropriate medical provision, drugs and substance misuse. These areas have specific policies and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this document.

Proprietors. All staff, including volunteers, have a statutory obligation to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if there is suspicion of abuse/neglect of a child or if a child discloses abuse or allegations of abuse.

What is significant harm?

The Children's Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is a compilation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies.

Early Help providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. It is about providing support quickly whenever difficulties emerge to reduce the impact of problems.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for child safeguarding falls on everybody who is employed at The Learning Tree. All adults who work at The Learning Tree are expected to support the Learning Tree's Child Protection Policy, with overall responsibility falling upon the DSL.

CAF – Common Assessment Framework an early help inter-agency assessment. It offers a basis for early identification of children's additional needs, the sharing of this information between organisations and the coordination of service provision. Early help assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989. The findings from the Common Assessment may give rise to concerns about the child's safety and welfare. In these circumstances, it should be used to support a Referral to Children's Social Care: However undertaking a CAF is not a pre-requisite for making a referral.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of The Learning Tree, full time or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting/carer role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

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The Learning Tree is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Designated Officer – new term for LADO – a post in the local authority, to coordinate and manage allegations against staff.

Social Care Direct – Local Authority children social care/Family services.

LSCB - Local Safeguarding Children Board

DSL - Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Annex E – Aspects of the Safer Recruitment Policy that are relevant to this policy

Safer Recruitment of Staff and Single Central Record (also refer to the Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures): The Learning Tree follows the Government's recommendations for the safer recruitment and employment of staff that work with children. The Single Central Register (SCR), often referred to as the Centralised Record, is rigorously maintained. All employees and volunteers are checked in accordance with the full requirements of the SCR before starting work. Where appropriate a check is made of the prohibition list. Assurances are obtained that appropriate child protection checks and procedures apply to any staff employed by another organisation and working with the The Learning Tree children on another site (for example, in a separate institution, on educational visits or other offsite activities). The Learning Tree complies with legislation whereby it is an offence: to knowingly employ (or take on as a volunteer), in a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulated activity, someone who is barred from such activity); not refer to the DBS details of anyone who is removed from regulated activity, or who leaves while under investigation for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk of harm.

Selection and pre-employment vetting: As part of our pre-employment vetting we ask new staff for information on disqualification. We carefully check the employment history of candidates including verifying references, which are taken up prior to interview, and investigating gaps in employment. Also, where an individual claims qualifications as part of an application for a position, these are checked in advance of employment. Documentary evidence is retained about employees, usually on their personnel file.

Regulated Activity: This includes teaching, instructing, caring for or coming into contact with children if the person is unsupervised, or driving a vehicle only for children. Any activity is only regulated if it is done regularly, with the exception of personal or healthcare which is always regulated. The definition of regular is that it is carried out once a week or more by the same person or it is carried out more than three days in any period of 30 days (or between 2am and 6pm).

Agency and third-party staff: We are responsible for ensuring that individuals are suitable. We require the agency or organisation to provide us with evidence that the relevant checks have been carried out; this includes identity, enhanced disclosure, right to work in the UK, barred list/List 99 check, prohibition order check, site of original qualifications, and overseas checks. We obtain written confirmation from the agency (or other third-party organisation) so that we can see and check all the evidence ourselves. We have an agreement with the agency/organisation that where convictions or soft information exists on a DBS certificate, we have the right to see that information (including the individual's DBS) and make our own decision about whether the individual is suitable for The Learning Tree. Insisting that we have access to such information ensures that we are satisfied that the right checks are made and only appropriate people are accepted into The Learning Tree. We also then check that the person who shows up at The Learning Tree is the person against whom the checks have been made.

Adults who supervise children on work experience: In line with KCSIE advice we require that barred check lists are obtained for people supervising a child under 16 on a work placement where the conditions for regulated activity are met.

Contractors:

Contractors for whom an appropriate DBS check has not been undertaken will be supervised if they will have contact with children. When large numbers of workers and subcontractors are on site, Health and Safety risk assessments will include the potential for contractors or their employees to have direct access to pupils. All contractors and sub-contractors will be issued with copies of our code of conduct for staff. We always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival.

Visitors: Authorised visitors will be asked to wear visitor or identity badges. Unidentified visitors will be challenged by staff or reported to the Proprietors.

The Role of the Proprietors: It is incumbent on the Proprietors to comply with their duties under legislation and ensures the policies, procedures and training at The Learning Tree are effective and comply with the law at all times. The Learning Tree contributes to inter-agency working in line with statutory guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children". The Learning Tree's safeguarding arrangements take into account the procedures and practice of the Local Authority as part of the inter-agency safeguarding procedures set up by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The Proprietors ensure that a senior member of staff, receives appropriate training to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection including safe recruitment issues at The Learning Tree, and is fully abreast of the guidance available for safeguarding. The Proprietors have formally adopted this policy and reviews its contents annually or sooner if any legislative or regulatory changes are notified to us.

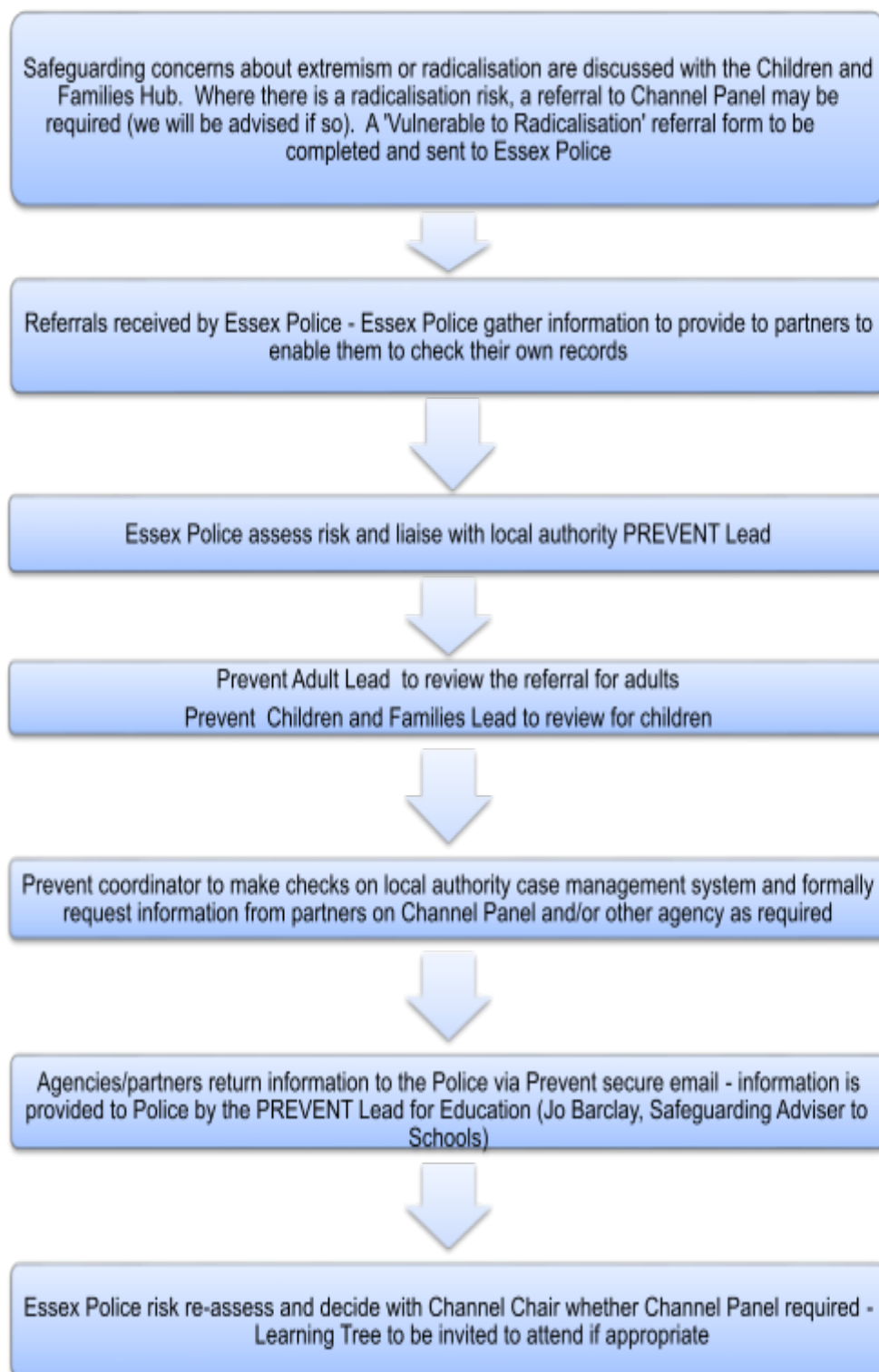
Obtaining a DBS barred list check and Secretary of State Prohibition Order.

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders: We comply with legislation regarding the recruitment of ex-offenders.

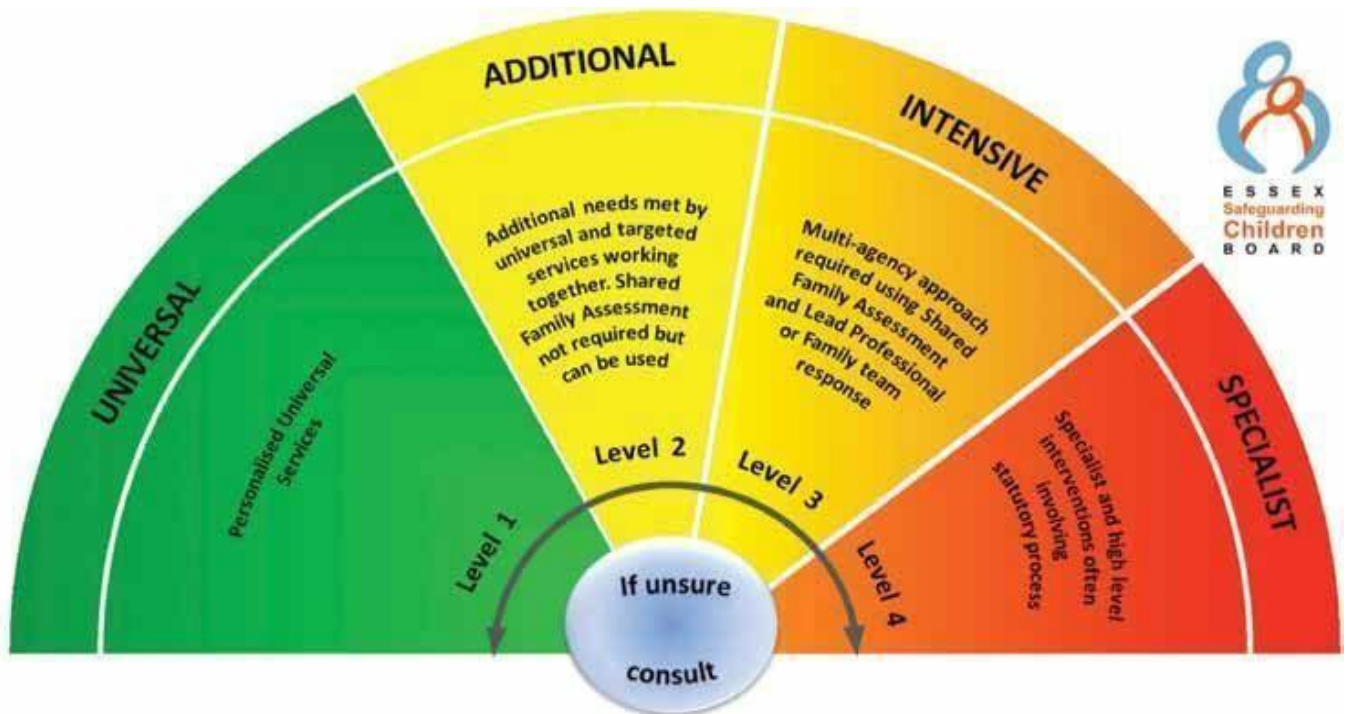
Appointment of Staff from Abroad: If we appoint staff who have lived or worked abroad we undergo the checks required from the Single Central Record (Centralised Register).

Disqualification by Association - early years and later year's provision: Pre-appointment checks in this regard may also be needed for relevant staff, leaders and managers as part of following the KCSIE supplementary advice. Employees who teach or manage any aspect of provision for children up to the age of 8 years are not allowed (in accordance with regulations made under Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006) to work in this capacity at our tuition centre if they, or others in their household are disqualified. This self-declaration form is incorporated into the appointments process for all staff. In the event of disqualification, the provider must cease employment. The grounds for disqualification are not only that a person is barred from working with children but also include whether they have been cautioned for, convicted of or charged with certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults, at home or abroad; other orders have been made against them relating to their care of children and they have had their registration cancelled in relation to childcare or children's homes or have been disqualified from private fostering. Disqualification occurs as soon as these criteria are met, for example, as soon as a caution or conviction occurs, even before the person is formally included on the children's barred list. DfE has advised that relevant convictions are not considered "spent" in this connection. Staff who fall within the 'by association' rule may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification.

Annex F PREVENT Referral Flow Chart



Annex G – Essex Windscreen of Need and levels of intervention



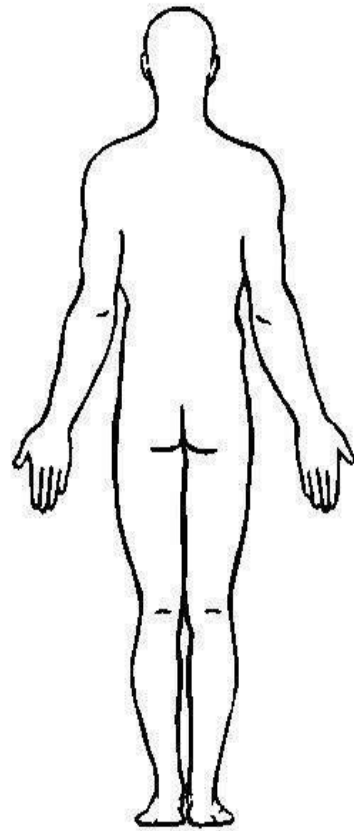
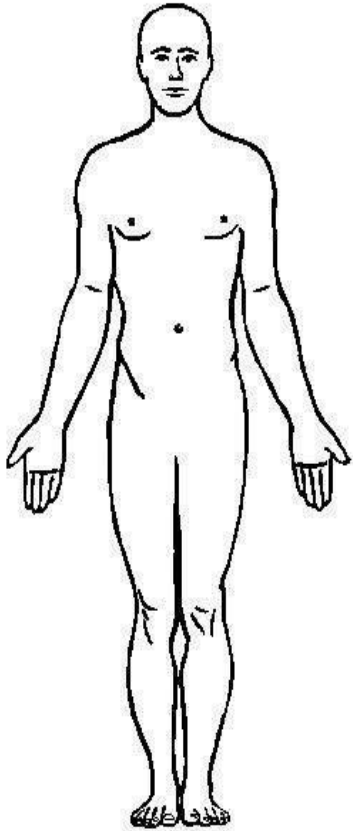
All partners working with children, young people and their families will offer support as soon as we are aware of any additional needs. We will always seek to work together to provide support to children, young people and their families at the lowest level possible in accordance with their needs

Children with **Additional** needs are best supported by those who already work with them, such as Family Hubs or educational settings, organising additional support with local partners as needed. When an agency is supporting these children, an Early Help Plan and a Lead Professional are helpful to share information and co-ordinate work alongside the child and family.

For children whose needs are **Intensive**, a coordinated multi-disciplinary approach is usually best, involving either an Early Help Plan or a Shared Family Assessment (SFA), with a Lead Professional to work closely with the child and family to ensure they receive all the support they require. Examples of intensive services are children's mental health services and Family Solutions.

Specialist services are where the needs of the child are so great that statutory and/or specialist intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Examples of specialist services are Children's Social Care or Youth Offending Service. By working together effectively with children that have additional needs and by providing coordinated multi-disciplinary/agency support and services for those with intensive needs, we seek to prevent more children and young people requiring statutory interventions and reactive specialist services

Annex H - Pre-Existing Injury Form



The pre-existing injury form should be completed upon arrival at The Learning Tree and signed by the parent at the end of the day if the parent is not on the premises at the time. Any conversation had with the parent to be noted on the form.

Date:.....

Witnessed by:.....

Verified by Parent/Carer:.....

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